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November 9, 2009

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Paula Hurley, Esq.
District Court Administrator
Office of the Administrative Justice
Johnson Hall, 3rd Floor
107 Pleasant Street
Concord, NH 03301

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL

Dear Ms. Hurley,

As you are aware, I have been on sick leave from my position as the Littleton District Court Clerk since August 20, 2009. My taking leave has been the result of an unmitigated hostile work environment that I had been subjected to for well over a year. As you were the individual dispatched in the middle of August to investigate my complaints concerning the work environment, I am writing to more specifically disclose what the source of my extreme discomfort was. Although particular incidents may be mentioned, by no means is this a complete rendition of what I have endured due to the ongoing nature of the problem.

During your investigation in August, I was reticent to describe the things that I am telling you in this letter because it was clear to me by your hostile reaction that I was not participating in a sympathetic process. Your lack of responsiveness and rudeness towards me when I was pleading for assistance was discouraging and unsupportive at best. You ultimately indicated that I had, "just a story and nothing else."

Prior to our conversations, I had made my direct supervisor aware of many of the issues that I have disclosed here. She continually dissuaded me from taking any action by indicating that I was in a dangerous position and she was afraid of what would happen to me. My supervisor was eventually taken away from me and I was told not to discuss things with her through an email from Judge Kelly.

I no longer had anyone to report incidents to. I experienced an absolute lack of support from anyone in your office, including Judge Kelly who refused to see me after your failure to assist me. The persons implicated below appeared to have immunity from discipline. For all these reasons I was reluctant to call attention to the heart of the matter.

Having had time to reflect on the adversity that I have endured, I am once again attempting to request assistance in addressing the issues that should have been dealt with upon my initial complaint.

The hostile work environment that I was subjected to had a sexual component to it. On a daily basis, conversations of a sexual nature between Michelle Brown, Lisa Towle and Lynne Gilman were broadcasted aloud through the office. The aforementioned individuals would discuss men who came to the window for business involving court matters, encouraging each other to "check him out". This behavior went so far as to include Ms. Brown encouraging Ms. Towle to look into their financial information for dating eligibility based on income and assets. Additionally, the virility of males was discussed, and on several occasions I was specifically asked about my husband's virility as he is an older male. Furthermore, Facebook was a website which was openly visited on a daily and constant basis in the office.

Ms. Towle and Ms. Gilman were the primary offenders who routinely and openly discussed (regardless of who happened to be within earshot of the conversation) how Michelle Brown, Lisa Towle, Lynne Gilman and Jaelyn (of the Lebanon District Court) would partake in sexual relations amongst one another. Ms. Gilman approached me upon one occasion and said something to the effect that I should "join in sometime", "try it, you don't know what you're missing". I declined her advances. Deputy Clerk Brenda Knapp was also well aware of the sexual relationships amongst the Family Division employees. On another occasion Ms. Gilman lifted up her shirt to show me her belly button ring, and insinuated something about nipple rings. It became public knowledge within the community that these women were involved with one another due to the way that they publicized the information.

When Ms. Brown was at the Littleton District Court she would not comport herself with decorum. Ms. Brown openly discussed her sexual feelings towards Judge McLeod. She would constantly verbalize how she "wants" him, and that he was "making her crazy". On one occasion it was the joke of the day between Ms. Brown, Ms. Towle and Ms. Gilman whether the judge was wearing underwear in court. The office was disturbed that entire day with jokes about that topic, and the jokes were even relayed via telephone to the Lebanon District Court. Additionally, Ms. Brown at times would bring boyfriends to the courthouse. On one occasion she discussed aloud how she was meeting a man during lunch and made it clear both prior to the visit and after what transpired during their encounter, including the reason she was wearing different clothing upon her return. On another occasion a male telephoned the office, and believing I was Ms. Brown, the caller addressed me as "Mrs. Blowjob".

Ms. Towle's inappropriate behavior was having the effect that both police officers and people from the community did not want to tend to their business in the Littleton Court, and this was brought to the attention of at least one of the sitting judges. Upon one occasion Judge McLeod said to me that he did not like what he was personally hearing, that he would say something to Ms. Brown about how Ms. Towle

should not be discussing her personal relationships while at the court. I agreed that the behavior was very unprofessional and that it was making me uncomfortable.

My rejection to partaking in the sexual activities of my coworkers, opposition to joke-telling, objection to the comments about my husband, and my overall insistence in the dignity and honor of the court has led to the retaliation of my coworkers who have created a hostile work environment at the Littleton District Court. In addition to the comments, jokes, advances and stories that were pressed upon me, I was subject to disrespectful attitudes and behaviors. The above-named individuals made it clear on a regular basis that what they did and said was none of my business. I was treated as if I was not in the room, distinct from the pleasant treatment that Ms. Knapp received in my presence. Rude comments were directed at me, including "I don't have to listen to you", and "You are such a princess".

Clearly the integrity, professionalism and effective operation of the Littleton District Court has been negatively impacted. One unfortunate aspect of all this is that the personnel in Littleton used to work as a team. Judge Kelly once held us up as a model for the other courts to follow. What was once respectable has become trashy and hostile. I have worked as the Clerk in Littleton for thirteen years, and the decline in the dignity and respect of the Court over the last couple of years has been a major disappointment, to say the least.

I urge the Administrative Office of the District Court to consider this information in addition to that already provided by me. Thank you for your consideration of these serious matters.

Very truly yours,

Michele M. Walker
Clerk of Court
Littleton District Court